

Introduced By: Mayor Porter

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

Resolution 2007-41

**Resolution Strongly Urging the WMATA Board to Reject the Recommendations
Of the WMATA Public Hearing Staff Report and to Direct WMATA Staff to Determine The
Size and Configuration of Land at the Takoma Metro Station Needed
For Current and Future Transit Use**

WHEREAS, a proposal to sell land for development at the Takoma Metro station was accepted before the amount and configuration of land needed for transit use was determined; and

WHEREAS, the size and configuration of land remaining for transit use under the proposal is unsuitable for transit use in that it precludes an increase in the number of bus bays to meet even the need identified in the Takoma Transportation Study; requires an inadvisable mix of bus and private vehicles, causing congestion and confusion and slowing bus travel times; greatly reduces the size and attractiveness of the main entrance of the station; reduces accessibility of the station for handicapped and Kiss and Ride patrons; and reduces the amount of space for short-term parking on the site; and

WHEREAS, the size and configuration of the parcel to be sold precludes meeting key conditions of development of the site identified in the Takoma Central District Plan, a component of the District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan, including ensuring that transit needs are met first before development of the site, ensuring that there is a minimum of a 50 foot buffer between development on the site and the apartments on Eastern Avenue, ensuring that the same number of parking spaces on the site remains accessible to the public after development, and ensuring the station is attractive and well-functioning; and

WHEREAS, the Central District Plan also calls for a western entrance to the station which, while not precluded by the size and configuration of the parcel to be sold, is not included as a component of the development plan; and

WHEREAS, significant problems resulting from the land sale in the size and configuration proposed have been enumerated in the attached Takoma Park City Council Resolution 2006-58, "Strongly Urging the WMATA Board to Disapprove the Proposed Amendment of the Mass Transit Plan Regarding the Takoma Metro Station So As to Preserve Full and Continued Access to the Station Facilities for Transit Users;" and

WHEREAS, the proposal fails to provide comparable access for disabled transit users as required

under the Americans with Disabilities Act in that the proposal actually reduces access for disabled users by moving the disabled access points farther from the elevator and reduces safety of disabled users by isolating the elevator access path from public view; and

WHEREAS, WMATA staff recommend minor modifications to the site plan which do not address the significant problems of the plan, but reduce the functionality and attractiveness of the plan even further; and

WHEREAS, rather than make recommendations to maintain and improve the transit facilities of the station and to meet the conditions of the Central District Plan, the WMATA staff leave key decisions on parking, the Eastern Avenue buffer, and the creation of an attractive station entrance to others, while not providing them the option to change the size and configuration of the land to be sold so that those conditions can be met; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing on the proposed amendment to the Mass Transit Plan related to the land sale was held on October 11, 2006 before the WMATA Board; and

WHEREAS, at that Compact Hearing, District of Columbia and Maryland residents testified in overwhelming numbers that the land sale as proposed would be harmful to the accessibility of the station for their particular transit needs; and

WHEREAS, 40 District of Columbia residents or organization representatives submitted written testimony opposing the proposed changes to the transit facilities, and 12 District of Columbia residents or organization representatives testified at the Compact Hearing in opposition to the proposal; and

WHEREAS, 115 Maryland residents or organization representatives submitted written testimony opposing the proposed changes to the transit facilities, and 42 Maryland residents or organization representatives testified at the Compact Hearing in opposition to the proposal; and

WHEREAS, of the eight individuals or organization representatives that testified or wrote in support of the proposal or made comments that took no position on the proposal, five of these expressed the need for more parking than the 75 surface lot proposal would provide; and

WHEREAS, the Takoma, D.C. and Takoma Park, Maryland community is not opposed to development in general and has encouraged and supported recent development immediately adjacent to the Takoma Metro station; and

WHEREAS, the Old Takoma Business Association, representing business owners in Takoma, D.C. and Takoma Park, Maryland, passed a statement on this issue and it is in the interests of both the District of Columbia and Maryland to improve the commercial

corridor; and

WHEREAS, Takoma Park has always been a transit-oriented community, has many neighborhoods without off-street parking, has large numbers of apartment buildings such that a majority of the city's households are renters, and is a community where 61 percent of the households have either zero or only one automobile; and

WHEREAS, reduction of access to the transit facilities at the Takoma Metro undercuts the transit-oriented nature of the Takoma community and harms many households that are transit-dependent; and

WHEREAS, it is the primary responsibility of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority to provide transit facilities for the community now and for future generations; and

WHEREAS, sale of WMATA-owned land at the Takoma Metro station before an assessment of the size and configuration of land needed for transit facilities is done is an abdication of that primary responsibility of the Authority.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND THAT the Board of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority is strongly urged to reject the recommendations of the August 13, 2007 WMATA Public Hearing Staff Report regarding the Takoma Metro station; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the WMATA Board is strongly urged to direct WMATA staff, in conjunction with its partner transit and planning agencies, to determine the current and future transit needs for the Takoma Metro station and identify the size and configuration of land required to meet those needs before moving forward on any land sale of station property; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, if the WMATA Board approves the sale of land as currently proposed, the City of Takoma Park calls upon the Federal Transit Administration to deny its approval of the amendment to the Mass Transit Plan, as contrary to the requirement that the transaction promote transit-oriented development.

ADOPTED THIS 24TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2007.

Attest:

Jessie Carpenter
City Clerk